

Bedford

The Reusable Bag Initiative

April 2018

What is the Reusable Bag Initiative?

A **pro-business** movement to minimize the **environmental and health risks** caused by using **single-use plastic and paper shopping bags**

Single-use Paper and Plastic Shopping Bags are Costing Our Community



Chemicals in Food Chain



Climate Change



Litter in Our Town



Harming Wildlife



Image from ecowatch.com

Are paper bags as bad as plastic?



“Paper bags generate twice the carbon footprint, four times the waste, and 20 times the water usage as thin plastic bags.”

-Joseph Greene, Ph.D.
Sustainable Manufacturing Program,
Professor at California State University

**The average
American family
takes home
almost 1,500
plastic
shopping bags a
year**

National Resources Defense
Council



What is a “Reusable” Bag?

A reusable bag is a bag with handles that is designed and manufactured for multiple reuses and meets all of the following requirements:

- Is machine washable or easily cleaned or disinfected;
- Does not contain lead, cadmium, or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts, as defined by applicable State and Federal standards and regulations for packaging or reusable bags;
- If made of plastic, is a minimum of at least 2.25 mils (thousandths of an inch) thick; and
- Has a minimum lifetime of 125 uses which means the capability of carrying a minimum of 22 pounds 125 times over a distance of at least 175 feet.

**Why not just
suggest that
people use
reusable bags?**

**Sometimes a
suggestion to
do something is
not enough**



**But the fee is not a
punishment....**

**It is a way to make the bags a regular
store product**

**After all, the store owner has to pay
for the bags, like for all the other
products in the store.**



Bag laws already exist in many countries:

Kenya, Mali, Cameroon, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Morocco, South Africa, Rwanda, Botswana, Somalia, China, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Myanmar, Israel, Macedonia, Denmark, Ireland, England, Wales, Scotland, Italy, The Netherlands, Germany, Romania, Switzerland, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Australia, France, Belgium

Some states and many cities and towns in the USA have bag laws as well

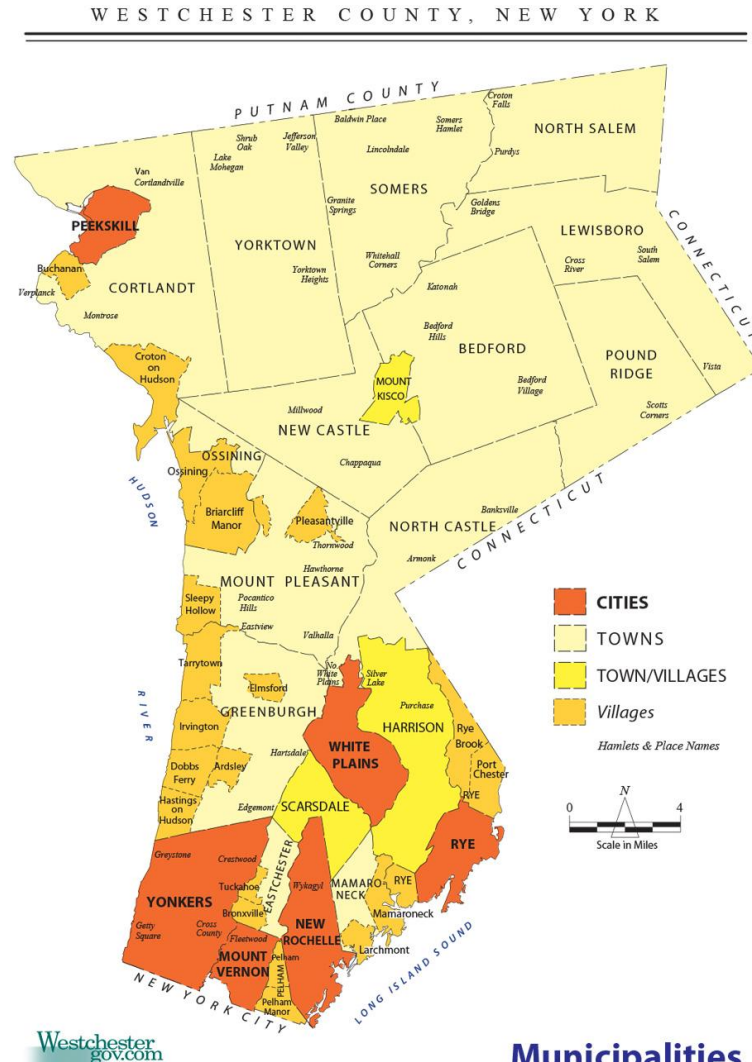
In Westchester it is happening too

Already have ordinances:

Rye
Mamaroneck
Larchmont
Hastings-on-Hudson
New Castle

Are working on legislation:

Pleasantville
Bedford
Mount Kisco
Lewisboro
Pound Ridge
Croton on Hudson
Ossining
Greenburgh
Yonkers
Yorktown
Tarrytown



The logo for Westchester.gov.com features the text "Westchester" in a large, teal, serif font, with "gov.com" in a smaller, teal, serif font directly below it. The text is centered and overlaid on a light blue, horizontally-oriented rectangular gradient background.

Westchester
gov.com

**The County is working on legislation
as well.**

But town laws will remain in effect

What do we want in Bedford?

Two general ordinances are discussed

1

A Plastic Disposable Bag Ban, with a minimum fee on paper bags and reusable bags

2

A General Fee on all carry-out bags

Proposed Ordinance:

What is the Same

- Bags used as packaging and protection (=produce bags) will continue to be offered without charge:
 - Meat and vegetable bags
 - Prescription drug bags
 - Newspaper bags
 - Greeting card bags
 - Small bags for boutique items
 - Small bags for hardware
 - Dry cleaner bags
 - Bags for items that need protection

Proposed Ordinance:

What is New

A minimum fee will be charged on carry-out bags in retail stores that sell dry grocery, canned goods, or nonfood items and some perishable items, and have gross annual sales over \$2,000,000.

Proposed Ordinance: **What we decide together**

What model do we prefer:

A single-use plastic bag ban combined with a fee on paper bags (New Castle model)

OR

A general fee on both paper and single-use plastic bags (Suffolk County model)?

Do we want exemptions?

How we can work together to stimulate the use of reusable bags

I don't want to disappoint or lose customers

Facts

A majority of citizens in this country are in favor of legislation

Store owners in places with bag legislation do not lose customers

Store owners in places with bag fees gain financially

Towns save money on litter removal

Legislation will include neighboring stores as well

Community Engagement

- Outreach in stores and markets
- Library / school showings
- “Bag It”
- Cooperation with the Community Center
- Cooperation with other towns
- Many supporting groups
- 2400+ signatures



The community is ready for legislation, and we will keep on working with the community to prepare an easy transition



**The Reusable Bag Initiative will
benefit Bedford for generations to
come**

Website for contact and information: www.thereusablebaginitiative.org

